

Vanessa Summers

State Representative • District 99

1999 Session of the Indiana General Assembly

State budget provides tax cuts, funding for education

The new state budget will make a very real difference in the lives of many Hoosiers. Some of the highlights include:

Program Funding

- **Public education:** Statewide total formula funding increase of an average of 4.7 percent in calendar years 2000 and 2001, with minimum guarantees of funding increases of at least 2.5%. Funding was increased for both at-risk and academic honors programs. Local schools and libraries also received \$76 million in technology funding.
- **CHOICE:** \$5 million increase per year in funding for home health care for the elderly
- **Higher education:** appropriations were increased by 7.0 percent in fiscal year 2000 and 4.7 percent in 2001
- **Vocational education:** incentives for school corporations to provide programs in which high employment demand exists
- **A new \$50 million 21st Century Research and Technology Fund** that will promote high-tech industries located in Indiana
- **Social services:** Funding for the seriously mentally ill is increased by \$3 million in 2000 and \$6 million in 2001. MRDD programs will receive \$39 million in funding.

Savings to Taxpayers

- **Elimination of county welfare fund and county welfare administration funds** from local property taxes (two-year savings: \$67.6 million)
- **Elimination of inventory tax for 87 percent of farms and businesses** (two-year savings: \$129.6 million)



Rep. Summers with her son, Trent.

Build Indiana Projects District 99

Oasis of Hope Shelter for Battered Women -- \$50,000

Flanner House -- \$100,000

Pathway Homeless Shelter -- \$50,000

The Respect Academy -- \$50,000
computer lab

Children's Museum -- \$50,000
star point program, enrichment center

UNWA Senior Citizens Assisted Living -- \$50,000

UNWA Community Development -- \$35,000

Why, Inc. -- \$25,000

Health Net Foundation -- \$50,000

Black Expo Economic Development -- \$25,000

Cardinal Ritter High School
Computer Networking Project -- \$15,000

Additional \$200 million approved for Indiana roads

I was pleased we appropriated an additional \$200 million from the state general fund for local roads over the next two years. This is in addition to the regular funding from gas taxes. Many of you have indicated your strong desire to see us do more road improvements throughout the state.

The amount listed for Indianapolis is in addition to the total for the county. The amount appropriated to each city is based on the population of the city.

Marion County -- \$13.4 million

Indianapolis -- \$13.5 million

Hoosiers will save \$672 million over the next two years in tax cuts

- **Homeowners:** a new income tax deduction for property taxes up to \$2500
- **Senior citizens:** an income tax deduction increase from \$1000 to \$1500 and a property tax deduction increase from \$1000 to \$2000
- **Dependent children:** an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1000 to \$2500
- **Small businesses:** property tax "add-back" repealed so business owners can deduct the amount of their property taxes from their state income taxes
- **Renters:** an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1500 to \$2000
- **Long-term care health insurance:** an income tax deduction for the premiums paid for long-term health care insurance
- **Earned income tax credit:** a new refundable credit for working parents making less than \$12,000 (replaces deduction)

How to Contact Representative Vanessa Summers

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Education

ISTEP Gateway Examination -- House Enrolled Act 1050 allows students who do not pass the ISTEP Gateway Examination to graduate, provided they meet certain other requirements. The legislation also provides that the case conference committee determines eligibility for graduation of certain students with disabilities. The act also provides that all students in Grade 10 must take the examination.

Postsecondary Proprietary Education Grants -- Combines the higher education award program for students at postsecondary proprietary educational institutions with the award program for students at other institutions of higher learning.

Educational Standards -- A roundtable has been created to develop educational standards for Indiana students. Standards would be set for each grade level, easily comparable to national and international standards, written in an easy-to-understand manner, and distributed to students and parents.

Indiana School for the Blind and the Indiana School for the Deaf -- House Enrolled Act 1904 establishes the Indiana School for the Deaf and the Indiana School for the Blind as separate agencies independent from the state. The legislation provides for administration by a school board that is appointed by the governor.



Rep. Summers with pages Bronson Woods and Lanesha Bolden



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House publications available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling 232-9995:

Relax . . . -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

Higher Education -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

Guide to State Agencies -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

Hoosier Fun and Facts -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

Is the address label on this mailing correct?

Please check the address label on this mailing for accuracy. If there are any errors or if you are receiving duplicate mailings, please contact my office at 232-0367. Every effort will be made to correct the mistake.

I appreciate your assistance in keeping the mailing list updated. This will ultimately result in more efficient delivery and substantial savings to taxpayers across the state.

State Phone Numbers

State Information	1-800-457-8283
Indiana House	232-9600
Indiana Senate.	232-9400
Governor's Office.	232-4567
Secretary of State	232-6531
Motor Vehicles.	233-6000
Natural Resources.	1-800-622-4931
Utility Regulatory.	1-800-851-4268
State Tourism	1-800-289-6646
Department of Correction. .	1-800-680-5889
Department of Education . .	232-6611
Department of Health	233-1325
Family & Social Services . .	233-4454

Summers votes to protect consumers, children

Stopping “slamming” & “cramming” -- House Enrolled Act 1628 gives the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) authority to impose a civil penalty on a telecommunications provider if the provider has violated the law or rules prohibiting the unauthorized switching of telecommunications providers or the billing of unauthorized services -- known as "slamming" and "cramming."

"Slamming" is the term used to describe the telecommunications practice of changing a person's phone service provider without the customer's permission. "Cramming," on the other hand, refers to billing for services not authorized by the customer.

Telephone solicitation -- House Enrolled Act 1434 imposes stricter regulations on professional solicitors and fundraisers while protecting telephone customers.

The act requires a professional solicitor to disclose several items to the attorney general, including the portion of a contribution that goes to the solicitor and the portion that actually goes to the charity.

It also requires professional solicitors to disclose many of those items at the beginning of each call, including the name of the company and the

phone number and address of the location from which the call is being made.

HMOs -- House Enrolled Act 1309 establishes an external procedure for grievances against HMOs. The act requires the Indiana Department of Insurance to hear grievances filed by individuals who have been denied services by an HMO.

The review would allow a physician who specializes in the treatment in question rather than a general practitioner or other physician to determine whether the patient should receive the requested services. Furthermore, the bill has provisions to ensure the review is done in a timely fashion. In life-threatening cases, the review will take place within five days.

This act provides a less costly and less time-consuming procedure for HMO grievance review. The independent reviews would be paid for by HMOs except for a \$25 filing fee paid for by the consumer.

Autistic Children --The State Department of Health will extend additional care, services and materials to autistic children less than 21 years of age. This will assure that autistic children will receive the same assistance as children with special health care needs.